A CONFESSION OF FAITH,

PENNED

By an Orthodox man of the reformed Religion:

Dedicated to ſome eminent Perſons, now aſſembled in PARLIAMENT.

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A Confeſsion of Faith.

Beleeve that nothing is without beginning but God, no nature, no matter, no ſpirit but one and the ſame God; That God as he is eternall, almighty, onely wiſe, onely good in his nature, ſo he is eternall Father, Sonne and Spirit in perſons.

I beleeve that God is ſo holy, pure, and jealous, as it is impoſſible for him to be pleaſed in any creature, though the worke of his owne hands: So that neither Angell, Man, nor World, could ſtand or can ſtand one moment in his eyes, without the beholding of the ſame in the face of a Mediatour; and therefore that before him, with whom all things are preſent, the Lamb of God was ſlaine before all worlds, without which eternall councell of his it was impoſſible for him to have deſcended to any work of creation, but he ſhould have enjoyed the bleſſed and individuall ſociety of three Perſons in Godhead onely for ever. But that out of his eternall and infinite goodneſſe and love, purpoſing to become a Creator, and communicate with his creatures, he ordained in his eternall councell, that one perſon of the Godhead ſhould be united to one nature, and to one particular of his creatures, that ſo in the perſon of the Mediatour

the true ladder might be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures ascend unto him: So that God by the reconcilement of the Mediatour, turning his countenance towards his creatures, (though not in the same light and degree) made way unto the dispensation of his most holy and secret will; whereby some of his creatures might stand and keepe their state, others might fall and be restored, and others might fall and not be restored in their state, but yet remaine in their beeing, though under wrath and corruption, all with respect unto the Mediatour; which is the great mysterie, and perfect center of all Gods wayes with his creatures, and unto which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer.

That hee chose (according to his good pleasure) man to be that creature, to whose nature the person of the eternall Son of God should be united: And amongst the generations of men, elected a small flock, in whom (by the participation of himselfe) he purposed to expresse the riches of his glory: all the ministration of Angels, damnation of Divels and Reprobates, and universall administration of all creatures, and dispensation of all times, having no other end, but, as the wayes and ambages of God, to be further glorified in his Saints, who are one with the Mediatour, who is one with God.

That by the vertue of this his eternall councell touching a Mediatour, he descended at his own good pleasure, and according to the times and seasons to himselfe knowne, to become Creator, who by his eternall Word created all things, and by his

eternall

eternall Spirit doth comfort and preſerve them.

That he made all things in their firſt eſtate good, and removed from himſelf the beginning of all evill and vanity unto the liberty of the creature, but reſerved in himſelfe the beginning of all reſtitution, to the libertie of his grace, uſing nevertheleſſe, and turning the falling and defection of the creature, (which was to his preſcience eternally knowne) to make way to his eternall councell touching a Mediatour, and the worke hee purpoſed to accompliſh in him.

That God created Spirits, whereof ſome kept their ſtandings and others fell, hee created Heaven and Earth, and all their Armies, and Generations, and gave them conſtant and everlaſting lawes which we call nature, which is nothing but the laws of the creation; which lawes nevertheleſſe have had three changes or times, and are to have a fourth or laſt: The firſt, when the matter of heaven and earth was created without formes. The ſecond, the *interim* of perfection of every dayes worke. The third, by the curſe, which notwithſtanding was no new creation: And the laſt at the end of the world, the manner whereof is not yet fully revealed: So that the lawes of nature which remaine, and now governe inviolably till the end of the world, began to be in force when God firſt reſted from his workes, and ceaſed to create; but received a revocation in part by the curſe, ſince which time they change not.

That notwithſtanding God hath reſted and ceaſed from Creation ſince the firſt Sabbath, yet, nevertheleſſe, he doth accompliſh and fulfill his divine will in all things, great and ſmall, ſingular and generall,

as fully &exactly by providence,as he could by miracle and new creation, though his working be not immediate and direct, but by compasse; not violating nature,which is his owne law upon the creature.

That at the first the soule of man was not produced by heaven or earth, but was breathed immediatly from God; so that the wayes and proceedings of God with Spirits, are not included in nature, in the lawes of heaven and earth, but are reserved to the law of his secret will and grace, wherein God worketh still, and resteth not from perfecting the worke of redemption, as he resteth from the worke of creation, but continueth working till the end of the world; what time that worke also shall bee accomplished, and an eternall Sabbath shall ensue. Likewise, that whensoever God doth transcend the law of nature by miracles,(which may ever seem as new creations) hee never commeth to that point or passe, but in regard of the worke of redemption which is the greater, and whereto all Gods signes and miracles doe referre.

That God created man in his owne Image, in a reasonable soule, in innocencie, in free-will and soveraigntie: That he gave him a Law and Commandment which was in his power to keepe, but he kept it not: That man made a totall defection from God, presuming to imagine that the Commandements and prohibitions of God, were not the rules of good and evill, but that good and evill had their owne principles and beginnings;and lusted after the knowledge of those supposed beginnings, to the end to depend no more upon Gods will revealed, but upon himselfe

himſelf and his own light as a God, then which there could not be a ſin more oppoſite to the whole Law of God: That yet nevertheleſſe this great ſin was not originally moved by the malice of man, but was inſinuated by the ſuggeſtion and inſtigation of the Divell, who was the firſt defective creature, and fell of malice and not by temptation from another.

That upon the fall of man, death and vanitie entred by the Juſtice of God, and the Image of God in man was defaced, and heaven and earth which were made for mans uſe, were ſubdued to corruption by his fall: But then that inſtantly and without interminſſion of time, after the word of Gods Law became, through the fall of man, fruſtrate, as concerning obedience, there ſucceeded the greater word of the promiſe, that the righteouſneſſe of God might bee wrought by faith.

That as well the Law of God, as the Word of his promiſe endure the ſame for ever, but that they have beene revealed in ſeverall manners, according to the diſpenſation of times: For the Law was firſt imprinted in that remnant of light of nature which was left after the fall, being ſufficent to accuſe; then it was more manifeſtly expreſſed in the written Law, and was yet more opened by the Prophets, and laſtly expounded in the true perfection by the Son of God, the great Prophet and perfect interpreter of the Law.

That likewiſe the word of the promiſe was manifeſted & revealed, firſt by immediate revelation and inſpiration, after by figures, which were of two natures; the one the Rites and Ceremonies of the Law, the other the continuall Hiſtorie of the old world, and the

Church

Church of the Jewes, which though it bee literally true, yet it is for the moſt part pregnant of an Allegorie and ſhadow of the worke of the redemption to follow: The ſame promiſe or Evangel, was more clearly revealed and declared by the Prophets, and then by the Son himſelfe, and laſtly by the holy Ghoſt, which illuminateth the Church to the end of the world.

That in the fulneſſe of time, according to the promiſe and oath, of a choſen lineage deſcended the bleſſed ſeed of the Woman, Jeſus Chriſt, the onely begotten Son of God, and Saviour of the world, who was conceived by the power and over-ſhadowing of the holy Ghoſt, and tooke fleſh of the Virgin *Mary*. That the Word did not onely take fleſh, or was joyned to fleſh, but was made fleſh, though without confuſion of ſubſtance or nature; ſo that the eternall Son of God, and bleſſed Sonne of *Mary* was one perſon: So as the bleſſed Virgin may be truly and Catholickly called *Deipara*, the Mother of God; ſo one, as there is no unitie in univerſall nature, not that of the ſoule and body of man, ſo perfect: For the three heavenly unities, whereof that is the ſecond, exceed all naturall unities; the unitie firſt of the three perſons in the God head: ſecondly, of God & man in Chriſt: thirdly, of Chriſt and the Church, the holy Ghoſt being the worker of both theſe latter unities, for by the holy Ghoſt was Chriſt incarnate and quickned in the fleſh, and by the holy Ghoſt is man regenerate and quickned in the ſpirit.

That Jeſus the Lord became in the fleſh a ſacrificer and ſacrifice for ſinne, a ſatisfaction to the

Juſtice

Juſtice of God, a meritor of glory and the Kingdome, a patterne of all righteouſneſſe, a Preacher of the Word which himſelfe was, a finiſher of the Ceremonies, a Corner-ſtone to remove the ſeparation between Jew and Gentile, an Interceſſor for the Church, a Lord of nature in his miracles, a Conqueror of death and the power of darkneſſe in his reſurrection; and that he fulfilled the whole Councell of God, performed all his ſacred offices and annointing on earth, accompliſhed the whole worke of redemption and reſtitution of mans nature to an eſtate ſuperiour to the Angels, (whereas the ſtate of man by creation was inferiour) and reconciled and eſtabliſhed all things according to the eternall will of the Father.

That in time, Jeſus the Lord was borne in the dayes of *Herod*, and ſuffered under the government of *Ponce Pilate* being deputy of the Romans, and under the high Prieſthood of *Caiphas*, was betrayed by *Judas* one of the twelve Apoſtles, and was crucified at Jeruſalem, and after a true and naturall death, and his body laid in the ſepulchre, the third day he raiſed himſelfe from the bond of death, and roſe and ſhewed himſelfe to many choſen witneſſes by the ſpace of divers dayes, and at the end of thoſe dayes, in the ſight of many, aſcended into heaven, where he continueth his interceſſion, and ſhall from thence at the day appointed, come in great glory to judge the world.

That the ſufferings and merits of Chriſt as they are ſufficient to do away the ſins of the whole world, ſo they are only effectuall to thoſe which are regene-

rate by the holy Ghoſt, who breatheth where he wil of free grace, which grace, as a ſeed incorruptible, quickneth the ſpirit of man, & conceiveth him a new, a ſon of God, and member of Chriſt; ſo that Chriſt having mans fleſh, and man having Chriſts ſpirit, there is an open paſſage and mutuall imputation, whereby ſin & wrath was conveyed to Chriſt from man, and merit and life conveyed from Chriſt to man, which ſeed of the holy Ghoſt figureth in us the Image of Chriſt ſlaine or crucified, in mortification through a lively faith, and then reneweth in us the Image of God in holineſſe and charitie; though both imperfectly and in degrees farre differing, even in Gods elect, as well in regard of the fire of the ſpirit, as of the illumination which is more or leſſe in a large proportion, as namely in the Church before Chriſt, which yet nevertheleſſe was partaker of one and the ſame ſalvation with us.

That the worke of the ſpirit though it be not tyed to any meanes in heaven or earth, yet it is ordinarily diſpenſed by the preaching of the word, adminiſtration of the Sacraments, Covenants of the fathers upon the children, prayer, reading, the cenſures of the Church, ſocietie of the godly, croſſes and afflictions, Gods benefits, his Judgements upon others, miracles, & the contemplation of his creatures, all which, though ſome be more principall and perpetuall, God uſeth as the means of vocation and converſion of his Elect, not derogating from his power to call immediatly by his grace, and at all hours and moments of the day (that is of mans life) according to his good pleaſure.

That

That the word of God, whereby his will is revealed, continued in revelation and tradition untill *Moſes*, and that the Scriptures were from *Moſes* time, to the times of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, in whoſe age, when after the comming of the holy Ghoſt, the teacher of all truth, they had delivered the tradition of Scripture, the book of the Scripture was ſhut & cloſed, ſo as not to receive any new addition : And that the Church hath no power over the Scriptures, to teach or command any thing contrary to the written word, but is as the Arke wherein the tables of the firſt Teſtament were kept and preſerved, that is to ſay, the Church hath onely the cuſtody and delivery over of the Scriptures committed unto the ſame, together with the interpretation of them, but ſuch onely as is conceived by themſelves.

That there is an univerſall or Catholicke Church of God diſperſed over the face of the earth, which is Chriſts Spouſe and body, being gathered of the Fathers of the old world, of the Church of the Jewes, of the ſpirits of the faithfull diſſolved, of the ſpirits of the faithfull militant, and of the names yet to be borne which are already written in the booke of life. That there is alſo a viſible Church diſtinguiſhed by the outward workes of Gods Covenant, and the receiving of the holy Doctrine, with the uſe of the myſteries of God and the invocation and ſanctification of his holy name, together with regeneration by his ſpirit. That there is alſo a holy ſucceſſion in the Prophets of the new Teſtament, and Fathers of the Church from the time of the Apoſtles and Diſciples, which ſaw our Saviour in the fleſh, unto the

consummation of the worke of the Ministrie, which persons are called from God by gifts or inward anointing, and this vocation of God followed by an outward calling and ordination of the Church.

I beleeve that the soules of those that dye in the Lord are blessed, and rest from their labours, and enjoy the sight of God, yet so as they are in expectation of a further consummation of glory in the last day, at which time all flesh of man shall arise and be changed, and shall appeare and receive from Jesus Christ his eternall judgement, and the glory of the Saints shall then be full, and the kingdome shall be given up to God the Father, from which time all things shall continue for ever in that being and state which then they shall receive.

So as there are three times or parts of eternitie, (if so they may be called) The first, the time before beginnings, when the God-head was onely without the being of any creature: The second, the time of the mystery which continueth from the creation to the dissolution of the world; And the third, the time of the revelation of the sons of God, which time is the last, and is everlasting without change.

FINIS.